

Alaska Telephone Association

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January 17, 1997

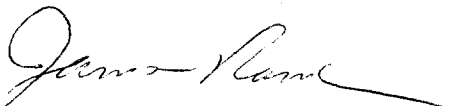
William F. Caton
Acting Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W.
Room 222
Washington, D.C. 20554

RE: CC Docket No. 96-45, Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service --
Recommended Decision -- Supplemental Comments

Dear Mr. Caton:

The Alaska Telephone Association respectfully submits twelve (12) copies of the following supplemental comments regarding the Federal-State Joint Board's Recommended Decision on Universal Service.

Very Truly Yours,


James Rowe

No. of Copies rec'd DLH2
List ABCDE

Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554

FCC 96J-3

In the Matter of)
)
Federal-State Board on) CC Docket No. 96-45
Universal Service)

Supplemental Comments of
The Alaska Telephone Association
in Response to the Federal-State Joint Board's
Recommended Decision on Universal Service
Released November 8, 1996

The Alaska Telephone Association (ATA), a trade association representing 22 local exchange companies in the State of Alaska, submitted Comments in this Docket on December 18, 1996 and Reply Comments on January 8, 1997. The ATA respectfully offers this additional material anticipating that it will be of value to the Commission as it weighs the Joint Board's recommendation.

Attached is a letter dated February 15, 1996 from Senator Ted Stevens to Steve Hamlen, president of Unicom and a member of the Board of Directors of this association. The letter responds to Hamlen's concern that committee discussions to limit universal service support to residential customers had been taking place. Senator Stevens' letter makes it clear that the conference committee considered the issue, but opposed it, by agreeing "to strike the word 'residential', so all subscribers, both business and residential are protected!"

Your attention is directed to this indication of legislative intent due to recommendations of the Joint Board in paragraphs 89-92. Paragraphs 89 and 90 recommend that residential support be directed only toward primary residence, single-line service. That limited support certainly assures that subscribers in high cost areas will not have equal access to advanced telecommunications as the Act intended. The letter from our Senator intimates that there was never any committee consideration of putting a limitation on residential service.

Paragraph 91 limits support to single-line businesses and paragraph 92 recommends that those single-line businesses be supported at a lower level than residential connections in high cost areas. The letter from the Senator very clearly demonstrates that support for business service would not be different from support for residential service. Telecommunications service in rural, high cost areas is intended to be equal to service in urban areas.

Respectfully submitted this 17th day of January 1997.



James Rowe

Executive Director

Alaska Telephone Association

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attachment: Sen. Stevens Letter

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-8025

February 15, 1996

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FEB 26 1996

UNITED UTILITIES, INC

Steve Hamlen
President
Unicom
5450 A Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99518-1291


Dear Steve:

Thanks for your letter regarding the telecommunications Conference Agreement. The House and the Senate approved the Conference Agreement on February 1, 1996 and the Telecommunications Act of 1996 was signed by the President on February 8, 1996. I am enclosing a copy of the Conference Agreement for you to review.

You will be glad to note that we got an agreement to strike the word "residential", so all subscribers, both business and residential are protected!

With best wishes,

Cordially,


TED STEVENS